

# Center for Workforce Learning



# **Whatever Happened to Customer Service?**

Center for Workforce Learning

6361 Timberbluff Circle

Avon, Indiana 46123

Phone: 317/838-5487

[www.workforce-learning.org](http://www.workforce-learning.org)



- All decisions that are made in my organization are based on customer values/expectations regarding that topic area.

← Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree →

- I have specific data that outlines our customers' requirements and the expected standards for each of those requirements.

← Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree →

## Center for Workforce Learning

- Our organization makes improvements using customer data.

← Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree →

- Our organization can articulate the ever-changing customer expectations and knows what it takes to exceed them.

← Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree →

- Our employees treat our customers as they wish to be treated.

← Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree →

- “I” would want to visit our organization as a customer.

← Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree →



## What Skills are Needed?

1. Silently identify someone who has provided you with exceptional customer service?
2. Give reasons why you think so?
3. Identify the specific skills they possess. Explain what you mean by each skill.
4. Provide examples and non-examples of the skill.
5. Are these skills critical to your job? Why?

## On Customers. . .

- They are not outsiders, but an integral part of our business.
- They are not an interruption of our work, but the sole purpose for it.
- We are not doing them a favor by serving them, they give us the opportunity to do so.
- They do not depend on us, we depend on them.

## On Customers. . .

- They are our most important visitor, whether in person, by phone, fax, mail or electronically.
- By serving customers, we are able to distinguish ourselves and our organization.

## On Customers. . .

- Customers are not statistics or market data. They are real people with feelings, emotions, ambitions, worries, and biases like our own.

## On Customers. . .

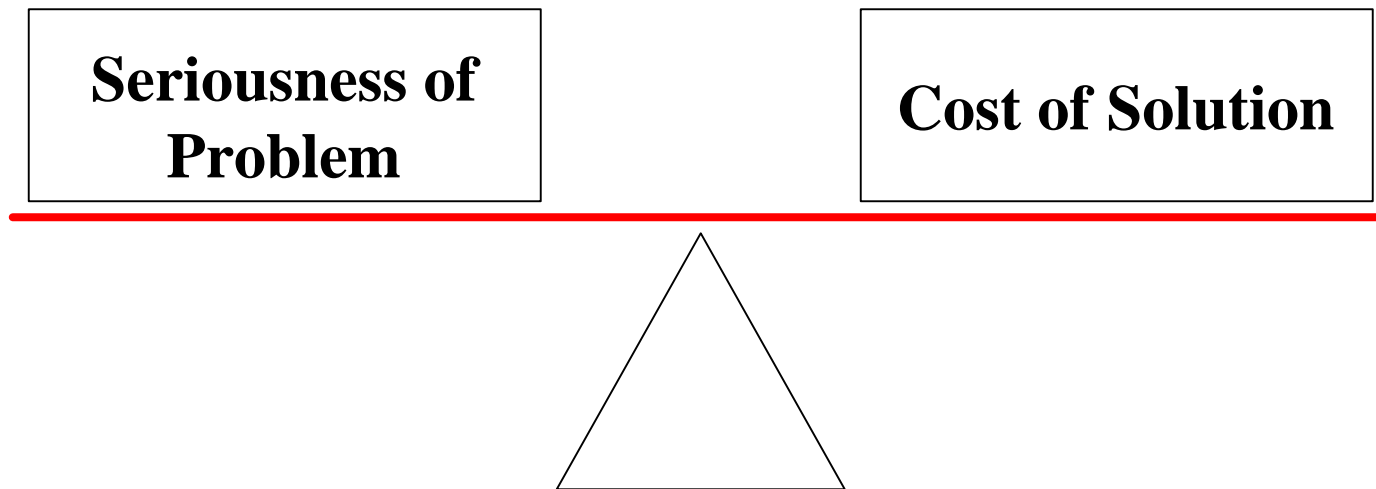
- They won't always tell you the bad news.
- Your image is the overall package offered.
- One negative transaction can kill the relationship.
- Attitude is an individual skill.

## On Customers. . .

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I want a product/service that fills my need</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Satisfaction with Results</b></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I want it to be easy to get</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Satisfaction with Process</b></li></ul>

# **Perceived Value by Customers**

Is problem big enough to justify solution?



## Communication Basics

- Communication is a people process, not a language process.
- Sometimes, how we present a point is more important than the point itself.



# Communication Basics

- Message Impact:
  - 7% of the impact of a message is conveyed through words.
  - 38% of the impact of a message is conveyed through language.
  - 55% of the impact of a message is conveyed through non-verbal.

## **Communication Basics**

- For the 500 most often used words in the American language, there are approximately 14,000 meanings. That is an average of 28 meanings per word.

## Building Rapport

- Greet like guests.
- Eye contact.
- Smile –sincerely!
- Break the ice.
- Get them doing something active.
- Appearance (People).

## Building Rapport

- Appearance (site).
- Phone technique.
- Politeness counts.
- Enjoy diversity/be non-judgmental.
- Call by name.
- Listen carefully.

## **Building Rapport**

- Anticipate needs.
- Fish for negative feedback.
- Explain how things work.
- Under promise, over deliver.

## The Survey Says...

- Greet me and make me feel comfortable.
- Make me feel important.
- Find out what I need and what I want.
- Listen to what I have to say.
- Hear what I cannot say.
- Help me meet my needs and wants.
- Make me want to come back.
- Make me want others to see you.

**“REAL”**

## **Customer Service Problems**

- I walked into the Center and didn't see anyone except a lady behind the front counter who was on the phone. She didn't look at me for several minutes. I stood in front of her. She finally made a face and motioned for me to sit down. I then waited another 10 minutes before she got off the phone. She walked away without greeting me and came back in another few minutes to see why I was there.

**“REAL”**

## **Customer Service Problems**

- I called the Center. I was not given a name by the individual answering the phone. I told him I was going to be losing my job and needed help finding one and thought I might want to do something different than I had ever done before. It was like didn't say anything; I was told I'd have to come in and check on job postings.



**“REAL”**

## **Customer Service Problems**

- When I walked into the Center I was told to get a number and wait without anyone finding out why I was there. Several others were waiting. When it was my turn, the receptionist asked for my social security number out loud in front of others. Then she wrote it on the sign-in sheet next to my name where others would see it when they signed in.

**“REAL”**

## **Customer Service Problems**

- The person that came up to help me kept saying things like UI, WIA, Eligibility, Assessment....don't know what any of these mean. I'm confused, nervous, and want out of here.

**“REAL”**

## **Customer Service Problems**

- As I was waiting for help, 3 people who looked like they were staff stood behind the desk laughing and whispering. I felt like they were talking about me.

**“REAL”**

## **Customer Service Problems**

- I was taken into the resource room and left. I thought I would be able to use the computer but suddenly I got nervous and nothing worked. When I asked for help they showed me how to get into the system and quickly told me next steps. I didn't catch it all and so never got very far.

**“REAL”**

## **Customer Service Problems**

- I was only given information pertaining to the agency that I was talking to.

**“REAL”**

## **Customer Service Problems**

- The person I spoke to kept saying “they” and “us” when talking about different services.

## Ideas for Improving Service

- Bulletins and annual reports that feature stories about customers and service.
- Encourage support staff to get involved in customer problem solving.
- Stress in each unit the impact that their decisions and actions have on the customer.
- Treat the customer as an individual, unique person – not a statistical abstraction.

## **Ideas for Improving Service**

- Encourage employees throughout the organization to interview, survey and listen to customers.
- Regard suggestions from customers and direct client service staff as tangible ideas for product improvement.
- Measure customer satisfaction frequently.
- Evaluate employees on contribution and results in customer service & satisfaction.



## Ideas for Improving Service

- Get top level involvement, not just verbal commitment for quality service.
- Encourage employees to use your products/services themselves.
- Become sensitive and responsive to the customer's perceptions of quality, regardless of what the hard facts indicate.
- Craft a philosophy statement that addresses the way you perceive and treat customers.

## **Ideas for Improving Service**

- List what your competitors do in terms of customer relations; how do you compare?
- Conduct a “How are we doing?” or “What would you like?” focus group of customers and non-customers.
- Commit yourself to performing one act of exceptional customer service each day.
- Meet with a lost “sale” or former customer to discover what caused the loss.

## Ideas for Improving Service

- Track a routine customer transaction or complaint to determine all the critical stages it must overcome before it is finalized (include all related departments).
- Call your own organization with a simple request. What kind of response do you get? How long does it take to get a response? What is the degree of courtesy? To what extent is your request satisfied?



Mary Ann Lawrence, President

6361 Timberbluff Circle

Avon, Indiana 46123

Phone: 317-838-5487

Email: [MALaw528@aol.com](mailto:MALaw528@aol.com)

Website: [www.workforce-learning.org](http://www.workforce-learning.org)



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